

Iowa Department of Public Health
Division of Behavioral Health
Opioid Update for Wednesday, October 18, 2017

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) offers the Opioid Update to share information about opioid use and Iowa's efforts to address the national opioid epidemic. Please feel free to submit topics to Julie Jones at julie.jones@idph.iowa.gov.

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Department Efforts

Opioid Epidemic Evaluation Study Committee

On October 16th and 17th, the Opioid Epidemic Evaluation Study Committee held a two-day meeting as part of their charge to comprehensively evaluate the state's response to the opioid epidemic. The Committee heard from numerous stakeholders during the two days, which included IDPH staff Dr. Patricia Quinlisk, Deborah Thompson, Randy Mayer, and Kevin Gabbert. In addition, substance use disorder treatment providers were on hand to present, which included:

- Ron Berg – Prelude Behavioral Services - *Iowa City*
- Barb Gay – ASAC - *Cedar Rapids*
- Mike Polich – UCS Healthcare - *Des Moines*
- Malissa Sprenger – Mercy Turning Point - *Dubuque*

The committee is tasked with submitting a report, including findings and recommendations, to the Governor and the General Assembly by November 15, 2017.

State Targeted Response (STR) Grant: Update

Recently, Substance Use Disorder treatment providers from across the state that are involved in the State Targeted Response (STR) grant were asked to complete a needs assessment in the form of a community assessment workbook focused on opioids. The providers engaged their community stakeholders and the most common needs identified included:

- resources to address treatment/therapy needs
- addressing prescribing practices for patients and providers
- raising awareness, naloxone access, and coordination with first responders

The next phase of the grant is to have these providers complete Strategic Plans outlining how they plan to address needs identified. Plans are due by November 1, 2017.

For more information on the STR grant, please contact Monica Wilke-Brown at monica.wilke-brown@idph.iowa.gov.

Strategic Prevention Framework for Prescription Drugs (SPF-Rx) Grant: Update

The Strategic Prevention Framework for Prescription Drugs grant to reduce the misuse of prescription drugs was recently awarded to providers in Polk, Scott, and Jasper County. The grant goals are to:

- Apply the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) model to address the prevention priority of reducing the misuse of prescription drugs
- Raise awareness about the dangers of sharing medications with youth ages 12-17 and adults 18 years and older
- Work with pharmaceutical and medical communities to address the risks of over-prescribing to young adults
- Raise community awareness and implement evidence-based environmental strategies to address prescription drug misuse to schools, communities, parents, prescribers, and their patients

As part of the SPF process, these three counties will implement at least four evidence-based practice strategies to help address the opioid crisis and overarching misuse of prescription drugs within their communities. These strategies will be decided during the planning step of the grant process.

For more information about the SPF Rx grant, please contact Janet Nelson at janet.nelson@idph.iowa.gov.

Iowa News

Marshalltown Doctor Talks About Decision to Become a MAT Provider

In the July/August edition of the *Annals of Family Medicine*, Dr. Nicole Gastala of Primary Health Care, Inc. in Marshalltown, talks about what lead up to her decision to become a Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) provider. In her essay she explores: her experiences as a new family physician in a rural town endemic with liberal opioid prescribing practices and opioid addiction; her inner turmoil while overcoming resistance to change; and the influence of those experiences on her professional growth.

To read the full journal article, please click on the following link: [Annals of Family Medicine](#)

Opioid News

60 Minutes: The Whistleblower

In case you missed it, 60 Minutes did a segment last Sunday on the opioid crisis in the U.S. The report stems from interviews with Ex-DEA Agent Joe Rannazzisi who says drug distributors pumped opioids into U.S. communities – knowing that people were dying – and says industry lobbyists and Congress derailed the DEA's efforts to stop it.

*To see the full segment, please click on the following link: [60 Minutes](#)